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If Only

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If Only

By: Darla Billington

I was a Chemistry nerd. He was the most popular frat guy in school, and I had a crush on him. William Bentley was a junior in College. He was hanging out with his friends one night when he got into a terrible car accident that killed his best friend and left him paralyzed from the neck down. A silver car struck their car head on and William's best friend had been decapitated—instantly killed. At the funeral, someone had pulled a horrific prank of pouring feathers from the ceiling of the church; supposedly as a frat boy farewell, but everyone knew there was some shady business associated with their family. His friend's mother became so frantic she had a nervous breakdown and was sent to a mental institution. William was later put into physical therapy where he officially learned he'd never walk again. I went to visit him in the hospital one day, and he thanked me for coming since he had lost all his friends. Apparently, his "friends" couldn't keep up with his "special needs," but really, they just didn't care for him the way I did. I loved William. I told him I'd visit him every day after class to try and help cheer him up so he wouldn't feel so lonely.

Two weeks after starting his physical therapy, security was called into his room because he found a feather on his pillow. He claimed it looked exactly like those at his friend's funeral. He thought someone was trying to kill him, but the security guard told him he was crazy and that it was just a goose feather from the hospital's pillows. I was so worried and distraught for William. He didn't sleep for days afterward and had purple rings around his eyes. If only he knew that I used to own a silver car. Recently, I had lost it in a terrible car wreck, on the exact day of his best friend's death. If only he knew that I worked the last five years in the chicken coop outside of town in order to pay for classes with plenty of access to feathers. If only he knew that sometimes it pays off to be the invisible, nerdy girl that he would never notice and no one wanted to date. If only he knew that sometimes the nerdy girl gets to be with the popular guy.